

Message Text

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46

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 PC-04 AID-20 IO-13

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01 EB-11 RSR-01

/172 W

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R 250920Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2906

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L KAMPALA 2393

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UG IS US

SUBJ: A "NEW" GENERAL AMIN?

REF: A) KAMPALA 2392; B) KAMPALA 2283; C) KAMPALA 2346

1. MESSAGE TO DAYAN COMES AS LATEST SURPRISING AMIN EFFORT TO SUDDENLY NOT BE HOSTILE TO COUNTRIES WHICH HE HAS HERETOFORE VEHEMENTLY CRITICIZED. NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH TANZANIA AND STATEMENT THAT HE NO LONGER IS AGAINST ANY COUNTRY, INCLUDING U.S. AND U.K., WERE SIGNIFICANT, TO BE SURE. CIVIL TONE (BUT NOT NECESSARILY SUBSTANCE) OF MESSAGE TO DAYAN IS NOTHING SHORT OF REMARKABLE, GIVEN AMIN'S USUAL HEAVY-HANDED ZIONIST-IMPERIALIST-MERCENARY APPROACH. WE OBVIOUSLY ARE LOATH TO RAISE HOPES OF A "NEW" GENERAL AMIN BUT ONE MUST ADMIT THAT SOMETHING INDEED SEEMS TO HAVE COME OVER THE MAN ROUGHLY SINCE THE AFTERMATH OF THE PEACE CORPS DETENTION INCIDENT. LATELY HE HAS BEEN RESTRAINED, PEACEABLE AND, WERE IT NOT FOR HIS HORRENDOUS TRACK RECORD OVER THE PAST TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS, ALMOST APPEALING, ESPECIALLY
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BEFORE THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS (REFTEL B) AND THE YMCA DELEGATES

(REFTEL C).

2. ALL OF THIS, OF COURSE, HAS TAKEN PLACE OVER A MERE TWO-WEEK PERIOD BUT IT HAS BEEN SUFFICIENT TO HAVE SIGNALLED A VERY DEFINITE AND FOR THE MOMENT WELCOME CHANGE IN HIS OUTWARD MOOD AND APPROACH. WHATEVER HIS MOTIVATION, IT CLEARLY HAS HAD A BENEFICIAL IMPACT UPON THE MORALE OF THE WESTERN COMMUNITY IN KAMPALA AND UPON THOSE UGANDANS WHO HAVE OCCASION TO DEAL OR ASSOCIATE WITH ITS MEMBERS. WE CANNOT AT THIS EARLY STAGE PRETEND TO KNOW THE REASON OR REASONS. THEY COULD RANGE FROM A QUICK IMAGE-BUILDING CAMPAIGN PRIOR TO THE OTTAWA COMMONWEALTH AND ALGIERS NON-ALIGNED MEETINGS. HE MAY HAVE BEEN PERSUADED HE IS MUCH TOO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH ARAB (AND OTHER RADICAL CAUSES) TO A SOBERING RECOGNITION OF UGANDA'S CURRENT OVERALL INTERNATIONAL STANDING AND THE COUNTRY'S DETERIORATING ECONOMIC SITUATION. IT JUST COULD BE, TOO, THAT THE STERN LECTURE FROM MOBUTU, AMIN'S OWN OBSERVATIONS OF THE FORTHRIGHT WAY NYERERE, MICOMBERO, HABYALIMANA, MOBUTU AND GOWON SETTLED THE TANZANIA-BURUNDI PROBLEM, AND EVEN THE POINTS MADE IN THE USG DEMARCHES AFTER THE PEACE CORPS INCIDENT HAVE MADE MADE AN IMPRESSION ON HIM.

3. EVEN SO, IT IS HARD TO FATHOM SUCH AN ULTRA-POLITE MESSAGE TO GENERAL DAYAN. THE LIBYANS, SAUDIS, EGYPTIANS AND PALESTINIANS MUST SURELY BE AS PUZZLED AS THE ISRAELIS UNDOUBTEDLY ARE. THE MESSAGE MIGHT BE MEANT TO IMPRESS THE USG OR TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF THE PENDING ISRAELI-BASED SUITS AGAINST THE GOU'S COFFEE MARKETING BOARD IN NEW YORK. AMIN'S PROPOSED EXCHANGE OF AIRCRAFT IS NOT NEW. THE ISRAELI EXECUTIVE JET HAS BEEN SITTING IDLE HERE SINCE THE ISRAELI EXPULSION 16 MONTHS AGO AND PRESUMABLY WOULD NO LONGER BE NEEDED ANYWAY ONCE AMIN RECEIVES HIS NEW AND LARGER \$5-MILLION GULFSTREAM TWO. PAGE AIRWAYS, THE U.S. FIRM FRANCHISED TO HANDLE THE GULFSTREAM SALE, HAS INFORMED AMIN THEY WOULD BE GLAD TO ARRANGE TO HAVE THE JET COMMANDER REPAIRED. MORE THAN A YEAR AGO AMIN ANNOUNCED HE INTENDED TO SETTLE WITH THE OUSTED ISRAELI CONSTRUCTION AND OTHER FIRMS ONCE HE RECEIVED AN "INDEPENDENT" VALUATION BY ARAB ENGINEERS OF THE WORK COMPLETED. BRITISH HICOM SOURCE INFORMED US LAST WEEKEND THAT IN FACT A SOVIET (SIC) TEAM EVENTUALLY CAME TO UGANDA, CONDUCTED THE VALUATION AND TOLD AMIN THAT DESPITE HIS REPEATED STATEMENTS THAT THE ISRAELIS MILKED HIM, CONFIDENTIAL

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HE GOT A GOOD DEAL.
BURROWS

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